



USS WHITE PLAINS (AFS-4)

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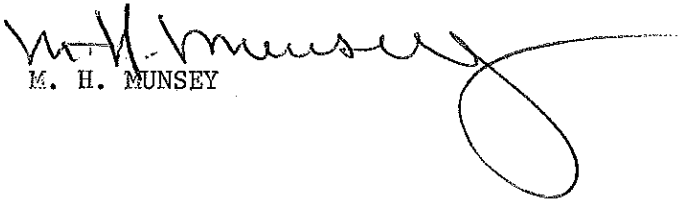
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Encl: (1) USS WHITE PLAINS (AFS 4) Command History, 1979 (3 copies)

1. Enclosure (1) is provided as required by reference (a).


M. H. MUNSEY

USS WHITE PLAINS (AFS 4)
COMMAND HISTORY 1979

During the period of 1 January 1979 to 31 December 1979, the WHITE PLAINS with embarked Helicopter Combat Squadron Three (Detachment 106) continued her rigorous schedule in support of Naval Forces deployed in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean.

The end of 1979 did not mark the end of her deployment, but rather the beginning of a long commitment to Task Force Seven Zero deployed in the Indian Ocean. During the 547 days from 1 January 1979 to 30 June 1980, WHITE PLAINS spent 52% of her time at sea and 30% of the time in her homeport of Yokosuka, Japan. The remainder of the time was spent in various other ports. During this time frame, the WHITE PLAINS completed 92 conreps and 151 vertreps, transferring 44,351 items weighing a total of 1,471.2 tons, plus 10,436 lbs. of mail, and 1,430 passengers.

As a forward deployed vessel and member of the Navy Overseas Family Residency Program, USS WHITE PLAINS has been assigned to the Western Pacific and away from the continental United States for nearly eight years.

The beginning of 1979 saw the "Orient Express", as WHITE PLAINS is known throughout the Western Pacific, preparing for the transit to Subic Bay, Philippines, from Yokosuka. On 11 January, WHITE PLAINS departed for Subic Bay, followed by a one week port visit to Hong Kong during the last week in January.

WHITE PLAINS returned to Subic Bay for the first week of February, departing again 7 February to conduct surface ship's radiated noise measurement tests. On February 12 WHITE PLAINS arrived back in Yokosuka where she remained till 21 February. She then got underway for Pusan, Korea for a three day port visit.

During the period 1 to 17 March, Forces of the U. S. Seventh Fleet and the Republic of Korea Navy participated in Exercise Team Spirit to evaluate coordinated Naval Operations. The Seventh Fleet Forces were led by the USS MIDWAY Carrier Task Group. USS WHITE PLAINS provided major logistics support.

WHITE PLAINS returned to Yokosuka on 14 March where she remained until 7 April. This time was spent in a general upkeep period and was also used for reloading stores. WHITE PLAINS departed Yokosuka 7 April for a four day period in Subic Bay to take on more supplies for delivery to the USS CONSTELLATION Task Group. WHITE PLAINS left Subic Bay on 16 April and replenished the CONSTELLATION Task Group 77.7 off Singapore as "Connie" was returning from the Indian Ocean. A brief stop was made on 22 April in Singapore to take on fresh food and vegetables.

WHITE PLAINS began the unrep on 2 May with MIDWAY and her escorts: ENGLAND, ROBISON, DOWNES and ELLIOTT. May 12th saw WHITE PLAINS return to Singapore for a four day port visit, followed by a visit to Pattaya Beach, Thailand from 18 May until 22 May. WHITE PLAINS departed 22 May for Subic Bay where she remained from 26 May until 31 May. This time was used as a reloading period for two upcoming Carrier Task Group replenishments, with the USS RANGER and the USS MIDWAY. Both replenishments took place during the first week in June.

WHITE PLAINS returned to Subic Bay on 11 June, where RADM MCCLINTON, COMNAVSURFGRU WESTPAC, presented the ship with the Battle "E" for the previous year. On 12 June, WHITE PLAINS headed back to Yokosuka where she arrived 16 June. From 16 June until 9 July, WHITE PLAINS enjoyed a regular upkeep period in her homeport.

On 9 July, WHITE PLAINS departed on a two week transit to Hong Kong. During this two week period, the ship refueled a Japanese seaplane and conducted a 12 ship unrep in support of Multiplex 6079. Major ships participating were USS TARAWA, USS CHICAGO and USS RANGER. WHITE PLAINS arrived in Hong Kong on 23 July, where she enjoyed a six day port visit before getting underway for Subic Bay on 28 July.

Between 30 July and 7 September WHITE PLAINS rescued 322 Vietnamese refugees from small, overcrowded boats in six separate encounters. Enroute to Subic Bay on 30 July, WHITE PLAINS spotted a small boat holding nearly 200 refugees some 200 miles from Subic Bay. Due to the weather conditions and the boat's lack of food, the decision was made to bring the refugees aboard. In this case, and in each subsequent pickup, the refugees were taken by WHITE PLAINS to Subic Bay where a receiving camp was established.

WHITE PLAINS remained in Subic Bay from 31 July until August 7th preparing for her Operational Propulsion Plant Examination which was successfully completed on 8 August. The remainder of the time in Subic Bay was spent reloading in preparation for exercise Fortress Gale involving amphibious units. WHITE PLAINS departed Subic Bay 16 August and the following week was spent providing support to Amphibious Squadron Five led by flagship USS TRIPOLI (LPH 10). WHITE PLAINS returned to Subic Bay 24 August. On 31 August, RADM MCCLINTON was relieved by RADM FRUDDEN as COMNAVSURFGRU WESTPAC and CTF 73. RADM MCCLINTON chose WHITE PLAINS as the ship on which to conduct his Change of Command.

On 1 September WHITE PLAINS departed for a scheduled replenishment of Task Force 75.3 led by USS BRENTON, BADGER, RATHBURNE and USNS PASSUMPSIC. While at sea on September 1 Captain M. H. MUNSEY relieved Captain R. S. OWENS as Commanding Officer. On 2 September, WHITE PLAINS spotted another refugee craft in distress and WHITE PLAINS picked up its 18 occupants. The following day, a Navy P3 aircraft spotted two small crowded craft together containing 154 refugees. WHITE PLAINS arrived on location just after midnight and because both craft were experiencing engine problems, the refugees were taken aboard and taken to Subic Bay. As in previous rescue efforts, each refugee was given a thorough medical examination and was properly clothed. In the next few days, WHITE PLAINS picked up several more small boats of helpless refugees. As a result of WHITE PLAINS professionalism and enthusiasm during these humanitarian efforts, WHITE PLAINS received a "Well Done" from Commander Seventh Fleet, Vice Admiral S. R. FOLEY, Jr.. After a short visit to Subic Bay on 10 and 11 September, WHITE PLAINS spent the next two weeks preparing for her INSURY/Underway Material Inspection on 1 October.

On 24 October, WHITE PLAINS departed Yokosuka to participate in a major Seventh Fleet exercise, Multiplex 180 and to replenish the USS KITTY HAWK Battle Group, consisting of KITTY HAWK, HALSEY, DAVID R. RAY, SHASTA, JOUETT, WORDEN and others. In the wake of the assassination of South Korea's president Park WHITE PLAINS remained off the S. Korean coast with the USS KITTY HAWK Battle Group helping to ensure the military stability of S. Korea.

WHITE PLAINS returned to Yokosuka 2 November for reloading. On 9 November WHITE PLAINS departed and after replenishing the KITTY HAWK Battle Group arrived in Pusan, Korea on 12 November for a four day port visit. After a two day transit, WHITE PLAINS returned to Yokosuka on 19 November. Due to unforeseen political circumstances associated with the taking of American Hostages in Iran, WHITE PLAINS' schedule changed drastically as she got underway for the Indian Ocean 26 November to join the KITTY HAWK and MIDWAY Battle Groups.

WHITE PLAINS arrived in Subic Bay on 1 December to commence a three day onload. She left Subic Bay on 4 December stopping in Singapore for a one day onload of additional supplies. WHITE PLAINS departed Singapore 5 December and proceeded via the Malaccan Straits for the Indian Ocean. On December 17, WHITE PLAINS arrived on Gonzo Station, in the Indian Ocean, and commenced the first of many unreprs with MIDWAY Battle Group 70.1 and her escorts USS BAINBRIDGE, PARSONS, STEIN and JOUETT, followed the next day by the KITTY HAWK Battle Group and her escorts, USS BERKELY, FANNING and DAVID R. RAY. On December 21, WHITE PLAINS completed a consol with one of her sister ships, USS SAN JOSE (AFS 7). On Christmas eve WHITE PLAINS' replenished USS KNOX. December 26 through December 30 was spent in Diego Garcia reloading supplies in support of the Indian Ocean Contingency Force. For the next five months WHITE PLAINS made continuous shuttles between the Gulf of Oman and Diego Garcia in order to help maintain the supply lines.

During 1979, WHITE PLAINS received several awards for her performance. She received two Navy Expeditionary Medals for her Indian Ocean deployments; one for time period 27 April to 10 May 1980, and the other for 11 December to 7 February 1980. WHITE PLAINS received the Battle Efficiency Award for excellence in operational readiness for time period of 1 July 77 to 31 December 1979. For having achieved outstanding retention, WHITE PLAINS was awarded the CINCPACFLT Golden Anchor Award for FY 1979. In recognition of WHITE PLAINS extensive humanitarian services during the time period pf 30 July to 7 September, the ship received the Navy's Humanitarian Service Medal.